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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
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Geneva, 29 June 1995

Agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Working Party */

At its twenty-fifth session (26 - 28 June 1995), the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget, having reviewed the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/50/6 (Section 10A), decided to recommend to the Trade and Development Board, at its resumed eighth executive session, to approve its agreed conclusions and recommendations and to:

(i) transmit Part A of the agreed conclusions and recommendations to the ACABQ and request that the comments contained therein be given due attention in the consideration of Section 10A of the proposed programme budget;

(ii) consider Part B of the agreed conclusions and recommendations at the special session of the Trade and Development Board in preparation for UNCTAD IX.

Part A

1. It was agreed that the proposed programme budget provided a satisfactory basis for UNCTAD to carry out its mandate. However, it was noted that the narratives could have been improved to reflect a better balance between the components of each subprogramme.

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*/ As adopted by the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget at its 109th plenary meeting on 28 June 1995.

2. Since the ninth session of the Conference, scheduled to be held in 1996, was likely to affect the content and the orientation of the work programme of UNCTAD during the biennium 1996-1997, it was felt that it would be necessary to review the programme budget as soon as possible after the Conference in order to assess the budgetary implications of the decisions taken at UNCTAD IX.

3. It was appreciated that the UNCTAD secretariat had made efforts to redeploy resources to programmes designated as high priority. However, it was noted that the setting of priorities was a complex process and that the correlation between the allocation of resources and designated priority areas in some cases was not totally satisfactory and needed further examination.

4. Concern was voiced that there appear to be duplications among various subprogrammes. While keeping in mind the secretariat's assurance that coordination takes place among programme managers on the activities under their responsibility, it was noted in this context that the presentation of the budget by subprogrammes should reflect the cross-sectoral approach needed in dealing with these issues.

5. It experienced difficulty in reviewing Programme 17, as the Commission on Science and Technology for Development remains a subsidiary body of Economic and Social Council and consequently outside the jurisdiction of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD (cf. TD/B/EX(9)/2, paras 21 - 22).

Part B

1. In view of the high number of subprogrammes designated as high priority, it was recalled that the Working Party, at its twenty-third session, had asked for guidance on the handling of this matter. It welcomed a decision by the Board at its ninth (pre-sessional) executive session to review the matter thoroughly after the ninth session of the Conference.

2. Where feasible, more comprehensive information on the demand for and usage of various UNCTAD products and services (e.g. publications) would facilitate consideration of the work programmes.

3. Further efforts were recommended to implement a recommendation by the Board as contained in its agreed conclusions of 14 October 1994 regarding the policy review of technical cooperation in UNCTAD (TD/B/41(1)14 (Vol I)) relating to transparent and equitable allocation of support costs.

4. It was also recommended that the Board review the role and functioning of the Working Party as appropriate.